

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SEOUL 02606 161745Z

42/43

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 CCO-00 /026 W

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O 161430Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9474

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 02606

EXDIS

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y PARA SIX TO END OF TEL

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, CASC

SUBJECT: MISSIONARY DEMONSTRATION

REF: A. SEOUL 2507 B. SEOUL 2466

1. FONMIN KIM TONG-CHO CALLED IN AMBASSADOR EVENING OF APRIL 16 TO DISCUSS DEMONSTRATION BY MISSIONARIES AT EMBASSY THAT DAY.

2. KIM SAID MINISTRY OF JUSTICE HAD REQUESTED HIM TO CONSULT WITH AMBASSADOR ON INCIDENT. HE SAID THAT THE PARTICIPANTS WOULD BE ASKED TO APPEAR AT SEOUL IMMIGRATION OFFICE IN ORDER TO DETERMINE WHETHER THEIR ACTIONS HAD VIOLATED THE STATED PURPOSES FOR WHICH THEY HAD BEEN PERMITTED TO ENTER ROK, NAMELY PROMOTION OF EVANGELISM. KIM SAID THAT, ACCORDING TO THE IMMIGRATION OFFICE, SUCH A VIOLATION HAD "APPARENTLY" TAKEN PLACE SINCE THE DEMONSTRATION WAS POLITICAL IN NATURE AND WAS MEANT TO CAUSE EMBARRASSMENT TO THE USG AND THE ROKG.

3. KIM NOTED THAT THE MISSIONARIES HAD NOTIFIED ABOUT 20 CORRESPONDENTS OF THEIR INTENDED DEMONSTRATION AND HAD DISTRIBUTED LEAFLETS TO THEM CHARGING THAT THE PRP PRISONERS HAD BEEN ILLEGALLY EXECUTED IN ORDER TO PROLONG THE PRESENT ROK
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PAGE 02 SEOUL 02606 161745Z

REGIME. THE LEAFLET, KIM SAID, ALSO MISTAKENLY

CHARGED THAT THE EXECUTIONS HAD TAKEN PLACE DESPITE PRIOR EXPRESSIONS OF US REGRET. KIM AT THIS POINT SAID THAT US, OF COURSE, HAD NOT BEEN TOLD BEFOREHAND OF EXECUTIONS. THE LEAFLETS WENT ON TO URGE THE US TO REVIEW WHETHER MILITARY AID SHOULD BE CONTINUED WHILE KOREA INFRINGES ON HUMAN RIGHTS. (THE EMBASSY HAS NOT SEEN A COPY OF THIS LEAFLET). KIM CONCLUDED HIS PRESENTATION BY SAYING THAT HE HAD BEEN ASKED BY THE MINISTRY OF JUSTICE TO TALK WITH THE AMBASSADOR AND GET HIS "ADVICE" ON THE MATTER.

4. AMBASSADOR NOTED THAT THERE NO QUESTION OF EMBASSY APPROVING DEMONSTRATION; IT WAS THE RIGHT OF AMERICAN CITIZENS TO ENTER THE EMBASSY AREA TO PRESENT A PETITION OR OTHERWISE EXPRESS THEIR OPINIONS PEACEFULLY. THIS GROUP PRESENTED THEIR PETITION AND THEN ENGAGED IN A VERY BRIEF DEMONSTRATION. THEIR PETITION AND SLOGANS WERE IN THIS FIRST INSTANCE AT THE US GOVERNMENT AND US POLICIES RATHER THAN AT KOREAN GOVERNMENT. UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, THEIR ACTIONS WITHIN THE EMBASSY AREA DO NOT APPEAR TO CONSTITUTE A VIOLATION OF KOREA'S IMMIGRATION REGULATIONS.

5. MOREOVER, THE AMBASSADOR NOTED, IT WAS CLEAR THAT DEMONSTRATORS WERE INTERESTED IN PUBLICITY IN US PRESS. EVEN IF THERE HAD BEEN GROUNDS FOR DOING SO, TO HAVE FORCIBLY PREVENTED THEIR ENTRY INTO EMBASSY GROUNDS OR TO HAVE EJECTED THEM WOULD HAVE MAXIMIZED THE PRESS COVERAGE THEY WOULD RECEIVE IN US. BY THE SAME TOKEN, EXPELLING THEM FROM KOREA WOULD PROBABLY INCREASE THE ATTENTION THAT WOULD BE FOCUSSED ON THEM IN THE US AND IN KOREA.

6. AMBASSADOR ALSO NOTED THAT EMBASSY HAD MADE AN EFFORT TO HEAD OFF DEMONSTRATION BY EXPLAINING US POLICY TO MISSIONARIES; THIS MOVE, HOWEVER, HAD NOT SUCCEEDED.

7. KIM SAID HE UNDERSTOOD THE RIGHTS OF AMERICANS TO ENTER THE EMBASSY; HE THOUGHT, AT THE SAME TIME, CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 SEOUL 02606 161745Z

THAT EMBASSY SHOULD GIVE ITS CITIZENS "GUIDANCE". AMBASSADOR POINTED OUT EMBASSY LIMITED IN ITS CAPACITY TO DO SO. KIM NOTED THAT THIS INCIDENT WOULD MAKE IT MORE DIFFICULT FOR HIM TO "PROTECT" FATHER SINNOTT, WHOSE VISA WAS TO EXPIRE ON APRIL 28.

ACOMMENT: SWIFT SUMMONS OF AT LEAST SOME OF DEMONSTRATORS TO IMMIGRATION OFFICE AND OF AMBASSADOR TO FONOFF INDICATES THAT ROKG HIGHLY EXERCISED OVER INCIDENT.

THERE IS ALSO LIKELIHOOD THAT ROKG CONCERN IN PART AIMED AT
EMBASSY FOR HAVING PERMITTED DEMONSTRATION WITHIN ITS GROUNDS.
KIM'S PRESENTATION HOWEVER, INDICATED THAT NO DECISIONS
HAD BEEN MADE YET ON FUTURE ACTION.
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